IMAC Training and Technical Assistance Subcommittee Meeting Minutes
1/20/04

Attendees: Theresa Fosbinder (State co-chair), Jenny Hoffman (County co-chair), Russell Yancy (County co-chair), Deb Solis, Mary Oberer, Jeff Brikowski, Judy Johnson, Lynda fischer, Vicki Jessup, Stacia Jankowski, Kevin Raines, Julie Loebel, Staci Wanty, Margaret Romans, Keli Poppe and Tricia Bless (guest speaker)

Finalize 2004 meeting schedule

Theresa summarized last month's meeting. The 2004 initiatives were briefly discussed as outlined in the meeting minutes.

Theresa asked if anybody had contentions with the meeting minutes. There were no contentions and the meeting minutes were finalized.   All meeting minutes will be posted to the IMAC site.

There was discussion about volunteering for meeting minutes. The following is a listing of volunteers for the next few months:

February – Vicki Jessup
March – Lynda Fischer
April – Deb Solis
May – Margaret Romans
June – Julie Loebel

Future months will be determined at a later date.

 Laptops or other equipment devices can be used for taking the meeting minutes. Theresa will attempt to remember to put the person's name on the agenda that has volunteered for that month to take meeting minutes.

Debrief from Food Stamp Application Processing

Theresa explained that there will be an emphasis on distance learning in 2004. This committee will be used as a sounding board to analyze what has worked and what needs to be tweaked for learners in an effort to best deliver training.

A concluding report was shared that summarized the background of the course and outlined the statistics related to participation. The automated case directory played a role in determining the statistics for this course. Gathering statisics taught usa lot but was a manual and time consuming process. This process will be a lot easier and less time consuming with the upcoming upgrade to the Pathlore learning Management system.

The food stamp application-processing course was not mandatory. There was a lot of discussion regarding whether future trainings should be mandatory or not. One idea was that any trainings associated with an operations memo be mandatory, as it is an introduction of new policy as opposed to refresher training, which could be a voluntary situation. The percentage of workers completing the course was very good considering the course was not mandatory. There were several agencies that had 100% of the staff complete the course.

Tricia Bless also had two handouts that listed the comments from the evaluations. There were a few areas where several comments duplicated. One was that the participants liked that it was independent, but they also like the interactiveness with a trainer in a question/answer group session. Another comment was that the workbook was difficult to read and it was too long; it couldn't be completed in one sitting.

Based on those two consistent comments, the group discussed the upcoming initiatives and how things could be changed to make it more conducive to the audience. One suggestion was to break the workbook into smaller sections rather than a four-hour allotted time. There was concern about workers not having the ability to set aside four hours of time at any given point to successfully complete the workbook.

The font size of the workbook was also addressed. Some folks expressed concern about printing out a lengthy workbook for cost purposes but the workbook was too difficult to read on-line. A suggestion was made to change the font of future workbooks to make it easier to read on-line for participants.

This group also discussed setting time frames for the training. For example, on-line courses are currently designed to be completed individually, however, if completed in a group setting, time frames should be listed to reflect the appropriate time necessary for completing the course in a group setting. There was discussion about how the different agencies approached the training, by allowing the staff to physically relocate to a different area so interruptions were minimized. One suggestion was to put a Do Not Disturb sign on worker doors so on-line courses could be completed.

These are items that this group will need to be concerned about. Those include training time frames and the tools available for the delivery of training (passive vs. interactive methods).

Additional discussion was brought up about workers completing the trainings individually, but then relied heavily on supervisors and co-workers when they had questions or got stuck. This requires a lot of additional time for supervisors that takes away from their other duties. There is a contact person listed in the training packet but manyworkers utilize their supervisors and co-workers as opposed to the Call Center or contact person.

An item that came up in discussion several times throughout the day was talk about having a regional trainer available during specific hours and days so that when local

agency staff are completing the on-line course and questions arise, they would have a contact person. There will continue to be a contact person listed for the materials and the Call Center will continue to be the central location for questions related to policy and procedure. In the past, very few phone calls have come into the contact person responsible for the training material.

A suggestion was made to utilize the Call Center phone number and have an option on the phone for regional training questions. The call would then be routed to either voice mail or a regional trainer if one were available. There is no way to commit the resources at this time but it was put on the table for discussion. Regional training is working on a more centralized way of functioning, so those trainers would be familiar with all materials.

A final note that was discussed was providing a WISline for a Train the Trainers type session, where local agency ATLs would get an overview of the training material prior to the training post date. There was overall agreement that this would be very helpful at the local agency level. This will continue to be discussed during future meetings.

Distance learning contact information instructions

The group discussed the steps for communication. The first item on the list is to establish a consistent list of IM training liaisons. Theresa is currently working with DWD and the list that DHFS has and will compile a list of all agency-training liaisons (ATL). Many of the supervisors on the committee agreed that having the information related to training in advance would be helpful for their individual agencies to plan for upcoming distance learning courses. The IM list will be utilized to do this, as some agencies do not have an ATL but rather a supervisor and a few workers. In addition, DHFS banks heavily on the IMAC in marketing upcoming initiatives so there is underlying assumption that the information is shared by the participants of IMAC.

The wording of the contact information embedded in distance learning pieces was discussed. Theresa provided a handout showing the current draft of the contact information that will be included with the training materials. The first sentence was changed to say Questions regarding this training material should be directed to Jeff Esterholm (trainer name). The last paragraph was taken out and a new one inserted to say, Contact and follow your local agency process for policy and procedure concerns as described I Operations Memo __-__. The contact information will be used for the upcoming trainings, including SAVE, TFS and Phase 2a. Theresa will confirm the contact page with the Call Center to be sure the department is aware of directing calls to the Call Center.

This committee agreed that the contact information page would be placed in the front and the back of the training packets, so participants had a reference to both locations.

Staci talked about the parts of the Transitional Food Stamp (TFS) training. There will be four parts to the training for IM workers. Those are: on-line quiz, training supplement guide and answer key, a PowerPoint, and an evaluation. It is projected to take two hours

to complete and will be available in CARES on 2/27 with a start date of 2/28. An Operations Memo should be available on 2/20/04.

There will be three parts to the TFS training for FEPs. Those are on-line quiz, training supplement guide and key, and an evaluation. It is projected to take one hour to complete.

Staci also discussed the rollout of Phase 2A/reduced change reporting phase 2. The training will consist of a PowerPoint and a script, which will explain the new policy and the semi-annual monthly reporting policy as well as explaining to workers how to explain the policy change to their customers. The time factor has not been determined yet for this course.

Pathlore Overview and Demo

Tricia Bless joined the group today to discuss the new Pathlore system (now called the PTS Learning Center) and present a demonstration of how the system worked. Basically, someone goes to the PTS Learning Center training site, click on the catalog, and register in the same way that has been done in the past. Once registered, the on-line course will begin. The assumption is that everyone will self-register.

The group discussed situations where one person in an agency registered workers to attend trainings. For on-line courses, this method is not well supported.   However, if on-line courses are conducted in a group setting, the names of the participants could be faxed into CCDET for course credit. The recommendation is that the quiz is completed individually but then the workbook could be completed as a group.

The PTS Learning Center provides a new page, called a summary or start page. The summary page shows two columns, one named progress, which gives the start and end times of trainings, and the other column shows properties, which gives the percentage of the course completed.   The bottom section of the summary page will have a link to bring workers back to the on-line course.

One difference between Pathlore and Authorware is that during an on-line quiz, the workers will not get the feedback after answering each question. However, workers will be able to review after the course is submitted and completed and at that point review each question to compare answers. In addition, if the PowerPoint is not completed, it will show up on the summary page as in progress.

An instruction sheet will come up prior to each component of the training. Throughout the day, the group discussed the issue of workers not taking the time to read the instructions. This may be a way to assist in having workers read the instructions.

Tricia asked the group questions related to the evaluations. The consensus of the group was that evaluations should be anonymous, otherwise workers would not be honest in responses. The evaluations would be advertised as anonymous and Pathlore would be able to track data from the evaluations without the submitter's name attached.

Tricia talked about the different distance learning tools available. She agreed to do a WISline Web demonstration at the next meeting. Some other options are Blackboard and Desire2Learn. Vicki Jessup shared her experience with both. A few other produces are web pages, or html based, that can be interactive training. Viewitbuilder, which provides moves that, are interactive. Flash, which involves a player but allows graphics. There is videoconferencing, which is low cost and provides high quality. Lastly, there is Quia, which will continue to be used. This committee will be used to make recommendations on what needs to be trained, how the training should be delivered and whether the training should be classroom or distance.

Conclusion

At the next meeting, the group will be discussing items that could or should be presented at the IMAC meeting on the 3rd Thursday in March. Theresa indicated that we could invite or participate in the big IMAC meeting. This subcommittee gets about 25 minutes to give an overview of recommendations related to training and technical assistance. Some of the items that will need further discussion are: mandatory vs. non-mandatory training, getting management buy-in and worker buy-in on distance learning, should the state provide PC internet training, and how training ties to the overall Food Stamp error rate.

The next meeting is Tuesday 2/17/04 at the Oshkosh Regional Training Center. Theresa will get directions and parking instructions out to committee members prior to the next meeting.